

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MBFR V 00492 101046Z

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INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0492

EXDIS

NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: MESSAGE #1: INTRODUCTION OF OPTION 3 INTO

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE DELEGATION RECOMMENDS THAT THE US  
DECIDE TO INTRODUCE OPTION 3 INTO THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IN  
THE NEAR FUTURE AND BEGIN SPECIFIC CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ALLIES ON  
IT BY THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY WITH A VIEW TO INTRODUCING OPTION  
3 IN VIENNA EARLY IN THE NEXT ROUND. END SUMMARY.

2. NSDM 269 APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE THE USE OF OPTION 3  
IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, BUT DEFERRED ITS USE.

3. SINCE THAT DECISION, US-SOVIET AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED AT  
THE VLADIVOSTOK SUMMIT ON GENERAL PROVISIONS OF A SALT II AGREE-  
MENT. FORWARD BASED SYSTEMS WERE NOT INCLUDED. IN LIGHT OF THIS,

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MBFR V 00492 101046Z

IT APPEARS UNNECESSARY TO WITHHOLD OPTION 3 FOR POSSIBLE USE IN

THE SALT CONTEXT.

4. IN EARLIER MESSAGES, WE HAVE STATED THE CASE FOR USING OPTION 3 IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IF THE WEST IS TO HAVE A CHANCE OF OBTAINING THE GOAL OF SUBSTANTIAL ASYMMETRICAL WITHDRAWALS OF SOVIET SOLDIERS AND TANKS.

A. THE SOVIETS INSIST ON "EQUITABLE" REDUCTIONS. THEY HAVE REPEATEDLY INDICATED THEY ARE UNWILLING TO DISCUSS REDUCTIONS SERIOUSLY IF THESE ARE CONFINED SOLELY TO SUBSTANTIALLY ASYMMETRICAL GROUND FORCE REDUCTIONS.

B. TO BRING THE EAST TO BARGAIN SERIOUSLY ON SUCH REDUCTIONS, THE WEST MUST OFFER A REDUCTION PACKAGE WHICH ARGUABLY BALANCES OFF THE GROUND FORCE REDUCTIONS SOUGHT FROM THE EAST AND WHICH WOULD PLACE EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES IN A POSITION TO MAKE THE CASE AT HOME THAT THE AGREEMENT REACHED DID NOT UPSET THE OVERALL BALANCE OF FORCES IN THE AREA.

C. OPTION 3 WOULD MOVE TOWARDS EASTERN INSISTENCE THAT EQUIPMENT AND ALL MAJOR TYPES OF FORCES IN THE AREA SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN REDUCTIONS.

5. THERE ARE OTHER REASONS FOR USING OPTION 3: CONGRESS IS AWARE THAT SINCE ITS SUBMISSION TO NATO IN APRIL 1973, THE US HAS CONSIDERED THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO USE OPTION 3 IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH SENATORS HUMPHREY AND KENNEDY AND CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI CONFIRM THAT, IF CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS ARE CONVINCED WE ARE MAKING A FAIR OFFER TO THE EAST AND NEGOTIATING SERIOUSLY, THEY WILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER CHANCE OF PREVENTING UNILATERAL CUTS.

B. THE SOVIETS HAVE PROBABLY BEEN AWARE OF THE EXISTENCE OF OPTION 3 AT LEAST SINCE US PRESS LEAKS IN SEPTEMBER 1973. THE FACT THAT OPTION 3 HAS NOT BEEN USED MAY BE LEADING THE SOVIETS TO CONCLUDE EITHER THAT THE US IS NOT SERIOUS ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS OR THAT THE WEST WOULD BE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR A MUCH MORE MODEST TYPE OF AGREEMENT THAN IT HAS PROPOSED. THIS LINE OF THOUGHT MAY BE ENCOURAGING THE SOVIETS TO CONTINUE TO PRESS THEIR PROPOSALS FOR A SMALL SYMMETRICAL INITIAL REDUCTION STEP AND A FREEZE.

C. WITH OPTION 3, WE THINK THERE IS A REASONABLE CHANCE OF OBTAINING THE PRESENT GOAL OF SUBSTANTIAL ASYMMETRICAL WITHDRAWALS OF SOVIET SOLDIERS AND TANKS. EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES HERE HAVE  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MBFR V 00492 101046Z

SEVERAL TIMES SPOKEN OF A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEIR TANK AND GROUND MANPOWER SUPERIORITY AND WESTERN TACTICAL NUCLEAR SUPERIORITY. THERE IS A LOGICAL SIMPLICITY TO SUCH A TRADE. IF IT COULD BE ACHIEVED, THIS OUTCOME WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE PRESENT EAST-WEST RELATIONSHIP OF CONVENTIONAL GROUND FORCES AT THE POINT OF CONTACT IN CENTRAL EUROPE. BY MOVING SUBSTANTIAL SOVIET FORCES BACK FROM THEIR FORWARD POSITION, IT WOULD REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF SURPRISE ATTACK WITH MINIMAL PREPARATION.

THE CONTINGENCY MOST FEARED BY THE EUROPEANS, ESPECIALLY THE GERMANS.

6. SEVERAL NEW FACTORS MAKE IT INCREASINGLY COSTLY TO DELAY USE OF OPTION 3:

A. THE NOV 5 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION RESULTS HAVE INCREASED THE URGENCY OF MAKING DEMONSTRABLE PROGRESS IN MBFR BY LATE SPRING OF 1975 IF UNILATERAL US REDUCTIONS ARE TO BE AVOIDED. THERE ARE ONLY FIVE MONTHS BEFORE VOTING BEGINS IN CONGRESS ON THE 1976 DEFENSE BUDGET. IN THAT TIME, WE SHOULD EITHER PRODUCE AN AGREEMENT, AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, ON TROOP REDUCTIONS OR PUT OURSELVES IN A POSITION TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE INTRANSIGENT IN THE FACE OF A REASONABLE WESTERN PROPOSAL.

B. OPTION 3 IS ITSELF A WASTING ASSET. PRESSURES FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF US TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM WESTERN EUROPE ARE INCREASING. PUBLICITY ON THE NUNN REPORT AND ON THE PENDING HEARINGS OF THE JOINT ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION WILL SIGNAL THIS TO THE SOVIETS.

C. IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, THE SOVIETS HAVE MOVED TO THE TACTICAL OFFENSIVE. THEY HAVE PRESENTED A PROPOSAL FOR A SMALL SYMMETRICAL FIRST REDUCTION AND HAVE FOLLOWED IT UP WITH A PROPOSAL FOR A MANPOWER FREEZE. THEY APPARENTLY INTEND TO USE THESE PROPOSALS TO BUILD PRESSURE IN WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION AND ON NATO GOVERNMENTS TO ACCEPT LIMITATIONS ON NATO FORCES ON SOVIET TERMS. IT SEEMS EVIDENT THAT THEY BELIEVE PRESSURES ON THE US FOR EARLY SUCCESS IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ARE SO STRONG THAT WE WOULD ACCEPT A SMALL SYMMETRICAL INITIAL REDUCTION.

D. THERE IS GROWING DISSATISFACTION AMONG THE ALLIED DELEGATIONS HERE ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS OF OUR PRESENT NEGOTIATING PROGRAM. MANY CONSIDER THAT THE US HAS NOT YET SHOW THAT IT IS REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT THESE NEGOTIATIONS. US CAPACITY  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 MBFR V 00492 101046Z

TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IS DECREASING; AND THE EUROPEANS ARE BEGINNING TO SHOW INTEREST BOTH IN A FREEZE AND IN PARTICIPATING IN THE FIRST PHASE.

E. AT THE SAME TIME, OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE ALLIES HAVE BECOME USED TO THE IDEA OF NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS AND NO LONGER SEEM TO FEAR THAT OPTION 3 PRESAGES A DISMANTLING OF THE NUCLEAR COMMITMENT. THE DUTCH AND BELGIANS ARE ACTUALLY PUSHING FOR ITS USE.

7. THERE IS, OF COURSE, NO ASSURANCE THAT OPTION 3 WILL PRODUCE THE DESIRED CONCESSIONS FROM THE EAST. BUT WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT TURN TO THE ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ABANDONING OUR GOAL BEFORE OUR MOST IMPORTANT NEGOTIATING ASSET HAS BEEN TRIED.

8. IF FULL DEVELOPMENT OF OPTION 3 WITH THE EAST DOES NOT SUCCEED

IN BRINGING THE EAST INTO SERIOUS NEGOTIATION ON THE ALLIED PHASE 1 PROGRAM, WE WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION, FOR HAVING DEPLOYED IT, TO TURN TO OTHER APPROACHES.

A. VIS-A-VIS THE EAST, WE WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO GET A SCALED-DOWN VERSION WITH ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS.

B. VIS-A-VIS CONGRESS, WE WOULD BE ABLE TO SAY WE HAD ADVANCED A REASONABLE PROGRAM FOR SIZEABLE REDUCTIONS WHICH THE EAST HAD REFUSED. WE WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO USE THIS FACT AS AN ARGUMENT AGAINST UNILATERAL US REDUCTIONS OR AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR ONLY SMALL INITIAL NEGOTIATED US REDUCTIONS, SHOULD THE LATTER COURSE BECOME NECESSARY.

9. ACCORDINGLY, THE DELEGATION RECOMMENDS THAT THE US DECIDE TO INTRODUCE OPTION 3 INTO THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND BEGIN CONSULTING WITH THE ALLIES BY THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY WITH A VIEW TO INTRODUCING OPTION 3 IN VIENNA EARLY IN THE NEXT ROUND. RESOR

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